

## Education

One of the most important resources of Placer County is its strong educational system. Through a network of public and private schools, the region benefits from a well-educated community and labor force. Local institutions offer programs for most undergraduate and graduate degrees, and several institutions specialize in services to assist the business community.

This section covers primary and secondary education, higher education, community colleges, public universities, private schools, technical schools, vocational training, and briefly covers data related to educational attainment in Placer County.

### Primary and Secondary Education

Figure 39 shows public school enrollment in school years 2000–2001 and 2001–2002 for Placer County’s largest school districts and for the Greater Sacramento Area. Western Placer Unified, followed by the Tahoe-Truckee Joint Unified, Roseville City Elementary and Rocklin Unified school districts are the fastest growing school districts in Placer County. Only Placer Union High School District lost student enrollment within that same time period.

FIGURE 39  
PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT GRADES K THROUGH 12

Area/School District	K-12 Enrollment		Percent
	2000-01	2001-02	Change
Placer County	55,531	58,228	4.86%
Largest Districts			
Dry Creek Joint Elementary	5,412	5,629	4.01%
Eureka Union Elementary	4,028	4,169	3.50%
Placer Union High	4,781	4,673	-2.26%
Rocklin Unified	7,426	7,899	6.37%
Roseville City Elementary	6,093	6,625	8.73%
Roseville Joint Union High	7,115	7,360	3.44%
Tahoe-Truckee Joint Unified	5,094	5,570	9.34%
Western Placer Unified	6,208	7,040	13.40%
Greater Sacramento Area	364,834	374,927	2.77%
California	6,050,895	6,147,375	1.59%

Prepared by the Sacramento Regional Research Institute  
Source: California Department of Education, Data Quest

Figure 40 illustrates Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade enrollment in Placer County by type of school in the 2000-2001 school year. Elementary schools have the highest enrollment

## EDUCATION

followed by high and middle schools. The county's charter schools' enrollment is also fairly large at 8.7%.

FIGURE 40  
TYPES OF SCHOOLS IN PLACER COUNTY  
2000-01 SCHOOL YEAR

<i>School Type</i>	<i>Number of</i>	
	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Enrollment</i>
Elementary	55	26,676
Middle	15	8,563
High	11	14,917
K-12	1	2,947
Alternative	5	1,163
Special Education	2	481
Continuation	7	637
Juvenile Court	1	147
Charter	6	5,292
Total	103	60,823

Prepared by the Sacramento Regional Research Institute  
Source: California Department of Education, Data Quest

Figure 41 shows 2001 Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores for school districts within Placer County, the Greater Sacramento Area, and California. Placer County's commitment to quality education results in consistently high levels of accomplishment for area students. The region's students have regularly outscored or performed similar to California students as a whole on the SAT. The average math score for public school students in Placer County was 531 for the 2001-2002 school year. The average verbal score for Placer County students was 518—28 points above the California average and 13 points above the Greater Sacramento Area average.

## EDUCATION

**FIGURE 41**  
**AVERAGE SAT SCORES FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS**  
**2001-02 SCHOOL YEAR**

<i>Area/School District</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Average</i>
			<i>Verbal</i>	<i>Math</i>	<i>Combined</i>
	<i>Tested</i>	<i>Tested</i>	<i>Score</i>	<i>Score</i>	<i>Score</i>
Placer County	1,508	33.49%	518	531	1049
Placer Union High	383	39.08%	526	530	1056
Rocklin Unified	210	48.50%	519	529	1048
Roseville Joint Union High	702	38.57%	516	535	1051
Tahoe-Truckee Joint Unified	179	42.22%	508	528	1036
Western Placer Unified	34	4.19%	494	474	968
Greater Sacramento Area	7,951	29.80%	505	527	1031
California	136,354	37.26%	490	516	1006

Prepared by the Sacramento Regional Research Institute.  
Source: California Department of Education, Data Quest

Figure 42 illustrates student performance in Placer County's eight largest schools districts compared to the California Statewide Academic Performance Index (API) performance target. The statewide target score of 800 has been adopted by the State Board of Education and reflects a high level of performance that schools should strive to meet. As the following table demonstrates, several school districts in Placer scored well above or close to the stated API target. With only two exceptions, school districts that scored below the performance target have all improved their API scores between 2001 and 2002.

**FIGURE 42**  
**PLACER COUNTY LARGEST SCHOOL DISTRICTS**  
**2001-2002 API PERFORMANCE**

<i>School District</i>	<i>Weighed</i>	<i>Weighed</i>
	<i>Average</i>	<i>Average</i>
	<i>API 2001</i>	<i>API 2002</i>
California Performance Target	800	800
Eureka Union Elementary	867	863
Rocklin Unified	812	813
Dry Creek Joint Elementary	802	811
Roseville City Elementary	776	781
Placer Union High	733	740
Tahoe-Truckee Joint Unified	732	726
Roseville Joint Union High	733	703
Western Placer Unified	688	689

Prepared by the Sacramento Regional Research Institute  
Source: California Department of Education, 2001-2002 Academic Performance Index (API) Growth Report

## Higher Education

Higher education is available from a variety of institutions throughout the area. In addition to University of California, Davis (UCD) and California State Universities, Sacramento and Chico (CSUS and CSUC), five community colleges, numerous vocational schools, professional schools, and local campuses of colleges headquartered elsewhere in the state provide for the educational needs of local business and the community. Within a three-hour distance from Placer County, the University of California, Berkeley and Stanford University provide an accessible supply of well-educated graduates. Map 2 presents selected academic institutions in the immediate Sacramento area.

FIGURE 43  
UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES IN THE IMMEDIATE SACRAMENTO AREA



Prepared by the Sacramento Regional Research Institute  
Source: Sacramento Area Commerce and Trade Organization, Sacramento Vicinity Map

This variety of higher education has been a strong attraction of the region, especially for knowledge and information intensive industries like electronics and biotechnology. With a local education network to tap, firms such as NEC and Hewlett-Packard have been able

to recruit employees within the area and, in conjunction with local colleges, design specific courses to the companies' requirements.

## **Community Colleges**

### **Sierra Community College District**

For over half a century, the 240-acre Sierra College campus has offered general education and technical courses. The main campus is located off Interstate 80 in Rocklin. Other facilities include a 105-acre Sierra Nevada County Campus in Grass Valley and a center in Roseville. These campuses offer day, evening, and weekend classes and are administered by the Sierra Community College District. Sierra has a national reputation based on excellence in such academic areas as computer science, mathematics, computer integrated electronics, nursing, and early childhood education. Sierra offers Associate of Arts and Associate in Science degrees, along with technical training and certificates in over 70 areas and career fields. In addition, Sierra College offers the first two years of pre-professional programs including Medicine, Law, Engineering, Computer Science, Education, and Business Administration.

Sierra College was one of 76 schools in the nation chosen to participate in IBM's Higher Education Alliance Program. The program assists students in learning computer-aided design, electronics and manufacturing.

To benefit area firms, Sierra College offers assistance through their Small Business Assistance Center and the Center for Applied Competitive Technologies (CACT). CACT specializes in combining computer-aided design and manufacturing to supply training and instruction to businesses in this particular industry. The college also provides on-site training and retraining to industry through its Contract Education Program.

### **Los Rios Community College District**

The Los Rios Community College District has over 70,000 students enrolled at American River College, Cosumnes River College, Sacramento City College, Cosumnes River Education Center in Placerville, Folsom Lake Center in Folsom and El Dorado Center in Placerville. Los Rios is one of the fastest growing community college districts in the state and is ranked second in the state for transferring students to the University of California and the California State University systems. The Los Rios colleges also offer more than 76 career education programs including such high growth career fields as nursing and health, computer information science, hazardous materials management biotechnology, electronics, and business. The district also operates The Training Source, a division that provides custom-designed training in such areas as electronics, computer science, supervision, management, and total quality management, as well as the Greater

Sacramento Small Business Development Center and the Center for International Trade Development.

### **Yuba Community College District**

The Yuba Community College District has been providing residents of Yuba and Sutter Counties with high-quality education for almost 75 years. Yuba College's main campus is located in Marysville, with other campuses located in Woodland (Woodland Community College) and Lake County, and centers in Colusa and on Beale Air Force Base. Yuba College is geographically the second largest community college district in the state. Its enrollment has grown to over 10,000 students throughout the sprawling 4,192 square mile district. Yuba College students who transfer to the University of California system and the California State University system have a higher grade point average (GPA) than the average transfer student. The facility is among the finest in the state for lower division college course work.

### **Public Universities**

The Greater Sacramento Area has three major public universities—California State University, Sacramento (CSUS), California State University, Chico (CSUC), and University of California, Davis (UCD).

### **California State University, Sacramento**

California State University, Sacramento—which was the site of the U.S. Olympic track and field trials in July 2000 and is located only five miles from California's capitol—is a major university in the state and the nation. Founded in 1947, the University has completed over one-half century of service. Approximately 26,000 students are enrolled at CSUS, and more than 70 nations are represented. CSUS's academic programs are organized into seven schools: Arts & Letters, Business Administration, Engineering & Computer Sciences, Health & Human Services, Education, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, and Interdisciplinary Studies. CSUS students earn degrees in more than 60 undergraduate degree programs and 40 graduate programs. The university is continuing an ambitious expansion and remodeling of facilities, which has brought more than one million square feet of new classroom and laboratory space. A carefully structured Strategic Plan is in place to help the campus enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century as a regional leader in higher education and economic development.

The Business Administration major is the largest undergraduate and Teacher Education is the largest graduate program at CSUS. Computer Science, Engineering, Economics, Biological Sciences, and Communication Studies also draw large numbers of students. Programs which specialize in graduate education include Business, Education, and Public Policy and Administration.

More than 30 research and service centers are associated with the university. In addition, CSUS has focused on extension and continuing education programs to accommodate the business community's changing needs. The continuing education curriculum includes Computer Science, Business Management, Marketing, and Accounting courses.

### **California State University, Chico**

Located 86 miles North-West of Auburn, California State University, Chico is another major public university that provides educational services for Placer County residents. Founded in 1887, the university is the second oldest California State University campus, known for its picturesque views, beautiful architecture, and a cozy, college town atmosphere. CSUC provides excellent educational opportunities and is committed to developing a high quality learning environment. The university's graduation rate continuously ranks as one of the highest in the California State University system and its graduates are among the most heavily recruited by major corporations on the West Coast. Its success is partly explained by its relatively low student-to-faculty ratio of 20 to 1, which allows a more personalized style of instruction.

The university total enrollment is 15,500 students who come from 43 different states and 58 nations. CSU, Chico comprises nine colleges, which include Agriculture, Behavioral and Social Sciences, Business, Communication and Education, Engineering, Computer Science and Technology, Humanities and Fine Arts, Natural Sciences, the School of Graduate, International, and Sponsored Programs and Regional and Continuing Education. The university offers 61 undergraduate degree programs with 160 options for major and concentration combinations. Business Management, Liberal Arts and Humanities, and Social Sciences and History represent the largest programs at CSUC accounting for 15, 11 and 9 percent, respectively, of the undergraduate enrollment. The university's Engineering and Communications programs are the following largest enrollment categories and are growing. CSUC is considered to be one of the leaders in distance education, having offered over 880 courses in 40 disciplines to students in the United States and abroad.

CSUC is also proud of its commitment to community service through organizations like Community Action Volunteers in Education and Students in Free Enterprise that promote and oversee student involvement in community activities and projects.

### **University of California, Davis**

When the University Farm opened its gates in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, it consisted of 778 acres of rich agricultural land. Today, nearly a century later, the University of California, Davis campus has grown to more than 5,000 acres, dozens of buildings, house laboratories, performance spaces, classrooms and libraries. The 26,000 students study under the guidance of scores of faculty whose expertise ranges from molecular biology to

modern dance. An acknowledged international leader in Agricultural, Biological, Biotechnological and Environmental Sciences, UCD is gaining similar recognition for excellence in the Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Health Sciences, Law, and Management. Ranked number 10 among the top public universities nationally by *U.S. News & World Report*, the campus is one of only 63 members of the prestigious Association of American Universities, whose members are selected by invitation only. UCD offers 110 undergraduate majors and 70 graduate programs in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Letters and Science, and Engineering and four professional schools: Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Law and Management. Over the next ten years, the campus will grow both in enrollment and in new facilities totaling about one billion dollars, including laboratories, classrooms, and student facilities. The UCD Center for the Arts (Mondavi Center), opened in the fall of 2002, and houses a 1,800-seat state-of-the-art performance hall and a 250-seat studio theater and provides performance space unrivalled outside the San Francisco Bay Area.

UC Davis Extension offers over 3,500 courses for more than 80,000 students each year. Course offerings include traditional classroom courses open to the public—many of them are offered in Sacramento—as well as online courses and customized on-site training for employers.

The UC Davis Health System includes a 528-bed teaching hospital in Sacramento, a medical school and a network of primary care physician practices and affiliated community hospitals in Northern California communities. The system operates the region's only Level 1 trauma center, a comprehensive cancer center, a children's hospital, transplant services, an Alzheimer's center, an institute for neurodevelopment disorders, and a burn center.

## **Private Schools**

Numerous branches of private colleges headquartered outside the Greater Sacramento Area support the region. National University primarily serves working adults with its intensive one course per month evening format in Management, Technology, Psychology, and Education. The university has approximately 1,100 students in Sacramento.

Smaller institutions include the University of San Francisco, which offers programs in Organizational Studies, Public Administration, Health Services Administration, and Counseling.

The University of Southern California's Sacramento Center for the School of Policy, Planning and Development has been offering nationally accredited Master's Degrees for over 25 years. It offers degrees in Public Administration, Health Administration and Planning and Development Studies. Classes are taught in small seminars with 10-20 students.



## EDUCATION

Golden Gate University, founded in 1853, is the fourth largest private university in California. The Sacramento campus offers undergraduate and graduate programs in Business, Technology, Taxation, Public Administration and Healthcare Management. The 1,500 working adult student population enjoys convenient, skill-building classes.

Bachelor's and Master's Degrees, as well as teaching credentials and extended education, are offered by Chapman University. This liberal arts university has approximately 700 students enrollment per term in the Sacramento Valley.

McGeorge School of Law of the University of the Pacific is a recognized leader in the field of legal education. McGeorge seeks to educate practice-ready graduates through its required curriculum and opportunities for practical experience in clinical and internship settings. A specialized curriculum at McGeorge leads to a Certificate in Governmental Affairs awarded concurrently with the Juris Doctorate Degree.

Also located nearby is the Lincoln Law School of Sacramento. Lincoln Law School is fully accredited by the Committee of Bar Examiners of the State Bar of California and serves about 270 students.

Bachelor's and Master's Degrees, and other programs of higher education are offered through several private schools, some of which are mentioned above. A partial list of these institutions appears below:

- Chapman University
- Golden Gate University
- Lincoln Law School
- McGeorge School of Law
- National University
- University of Phoenix
- University of San Francisco
- University of Southern California

### **Technical Schools and Vocational Training**

In addition to the comprehensive instruction given at area community colleges, specific technical training is available at more than 100 trade and vocational schools in the Greater Sacramento Area. The Sacramento County Office of Education operates Regional Occupational Programs that regularly train high school students and adults for careers as electronic technicians, computer programmers, woodworkers, welders, automotive technicians, metal workers and graphic arts personnel. Traditional vocational school programs include Computer Operations and Programming, Accounting, Secretarial, Medical Office, Legal Office and Electronics. Also, many vocational schools are approved to offer both diplomas and degree programs.

The best known schools offering vocational education are the Heald Business Colleges; ITT Technical Institute (which offers Associate of Science and Bachelor of Science Degrees), MTI College of Business Technology, Western Career College, and the National Education Center (Sawyer Campus).

### **Educational Attainment**

Figure 44 demonstrates changes that occurred in the educational attainment patterns in Placer County between 1990 and 2000. The table illustrates a dramatic, almost 94 percent, increase in the attainment of Bachelor's and higher level degrees, and a significant growth of 55 percent in the number of Associate Degrees and other college level instruction received by Placer County residents (these numbers do not account for a 45 percent population growth in the county). At the same time, the number of lesser-educated people has significantly fallen from 26 percent to 21 percent in the high school level education category and from 15 to 9.5 percent in the less than high school level category. Overall, Placer County represents a more educated community compared to the Greater Sacramento Area and the state of California in general. Sixty-nine percent of Placer County's population has received instruction beyond high school level, compared to 61 and 57 percent in the Greater Sacramento Area and California, respectively. The number of Placer residents with Bachelor's and higher level degrees is also significantly higher at over 30 percent, compared to 25.6 percent in the Greater Sacramento Area and 26.6 percent in California.

## EDUCATION

**FIGURE 44**  
**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**

<i>Educational Attainment Categories</i>	1990		2000		<i>Percent Change</i>
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>1990-2000</i>
<b>Placer County</b>					
Population 25 years and over	114,422	100.0%	165,894	100.0%	45.0%
Less than high school graduate	17,006	14.9%	15,835	9.5%	-6.9%
High school graduate (incl. equivalency)	29,751	26.0%	35,327	21.3%	18.7%
Some college or associate degree	41,725	36.5%	64,506	38.9%	54.6%
Bachelor's degree or higher	25,940	22.7%	50,226	30.3%	93.6%
<b>Greater Sacramento Area</b>					
Population 25 years and over	1,015,288	100.0%	1,223,128	100.0%	20.5%
Less than high school graduate	185,082	18.2%	199,068	16.3%	7.6%
High school graduate (incl. equivalency)	248,743	24.5%	275,227	22.5%	10.6%
Some college or associate degree	352,236	34.7%	435,384	35.6%	23.6%
Bachelor's degree or higher	229,227	22.6%	313,449	25.6%	36.7%
<b>California</b>					
Population 25 years and over	18,695,499	100.0%	21,298,900	100.0%	13.9%
Less than high school graduate	4,450,528	23.8%	4,942,743	23.2%	11.1%
High school graduate (incl. equivalency)	4,167,897	22.3%	4,288,452	20.1%	2.9%
Some college or associate degree	5,710,400	30.5%	6,397,739	30.0%	12.0%
Bachelor's degree or higher	4,366,674	23.4%	5,669,966	26.6%	29.8%

Prepared by the Sacramento Regional Research Institute.  
Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 & 2000 Census